

**CITY OF BRIDGEPORT
ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE
TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 17, 2013
6:00 PM**

ATTENDANCE: Co-chair Martinez; Co-chair Brantley; Council members: Lyons, Marella, Banta, Stafstrom, dePara
Council President McCarthy

CITY STAFF: B. Coleman, Director, Neighborhood Development; M. Perez, Sr. Economic Dev., P. Carleton, Grants Writer, Central Grants Office
E. Torres, Bridgeport Neighborhood Trust; T. Fairbairn, Acting Director, Housing & Community Dev.,

Co-chair Martinez called the meeting to order at 6:10 pm.

It was stated that the agenda would be taken out of order.

121-12 Proposed Resolution regarding HOME Program Sub-recipient Administrator for **(Ref. #35-10** Down Payment and Closing Cost Assistance Program for Program Year 37 and **& #53-11)** Program Year 38.

Mr. Fairbairn stated that this proposal was for the Bridgeport Neighborhood Trust funded with HOME funds in the amount of \$300k. The program ran during 2011 and was successful and an RFP was conducted. The program involves home buyer education for Bridgeport residents that are buying their first home in the city – *he distributed a copy of the agreement and submitted a copy of the program application and description.*

Co-chair Martinez asked if the funds apply for this year or next year. Mr. Fairbairn said the funds will apply for next year.

Co-chair Martinez asked where resident apply. Mr. Fairbairn said they go through the Bridgeport Neighborhood Trust and upon approval of the application, they will receive the funding. He mentioned that they were happy to be working with the Bridgeport Neighborhood Trust, noting that the program has been successful.

Council member Banta asked the number of people on waiting list. Mr. Fairbairn said once the program is publicly noticed, they will determine eligibility and everyone will have an opportunity to apply. He said the applicant must have a house in mind and be pre-approved by a reputable lender.

Co-chair Martinez asked how the program will be advertised. Liz Torres said they will work with the city to develop a marketing strategy. She recalled that last year, they held a meeting and invited between 40 and 50 lenders that helped get the word out. They will also utilize face book, press release, newspaper and the NRZ's will be informed to get the word out to residents - *a copy of the quick facts sheet was distributed.*

**** COUNCIL MEMBER MARELLA MOVED TO APPROVE**

**** COUNCIL MEMBERS BRANTLEY SECONDED**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

***Consent calendar**

139-12 Grant Submission: re State Department of Energy and Environmental Protection for an Elton Rogers Park Dam-Ox Flood Control Project.

Patrick Carleton distributed a copy of the draft resolution and grant summary. He gave an overview of the project, which outlined that The City of Bridgeport will receive \$260,000 from the State of Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection for the evaluation and design of a flood control impoundment at the Elton Rogers Park Dam as part of the larger Ox Brook Flood Control Project in Bridgeport. Currently, the project site is in very poor condition and has failed. The embankment failure area exists upstream and downstream near what appears to have once been a possible outlet structure. This design project will ultimately lead to a reconstruction project aimed at improving storm water retention to help reduce or eliminate flooding downstream under certain storm events, provide an adequate outlet and insure ease of maintenance access.

He commented that after the evaluation and design, funding will be administered for the design stage.

Co-chair Brantley asked what part of the city the project runs through. John explained that it starts in Elton Rogers Park up to Trumbull. He said the intent of the project is to use the existing dam and land to create less flow down to Oxbrook. It will meander down to part of the Rooster River where it will take some of the flow from the northern end of the city; a discharge pipe will be installed to control the water outlet and everything that doesn't go through the pipe will remain at Elton Rogers Park.

Council President McCarthy stated that he has been involved in this project to help try to solve the problem. He commented that this is the first step to a huge solution and right now, they are trying to alleviate the water flooding issue. He explained that the overall problem is a regional problem and the end result is that there is a plan to create a retaining pond and culverts, which will result in a huge project; however, this is the first step.

Co-chair Brantley asked if the information could be distributed to the residents that are affected by the water streams to address the issue of what they are expected to do as it pertains to cleaning out Rooster River. She noted that there are problems with raw sewage, debris and rodents. Co-chair Martinez encouraged the residents that were present to get together with the project leader and State Representative Hennessey to discuss the matter further.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER MARELLA MOVED TO APPROVE**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER STAFSTROM SECONDED**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

***Consent calendar**

130-12 Grant Submission: re Connecticut State Library for an Every Child Read to Read (ECRR) Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) Grant.

Co-chair Martinez stated that no information had been submitted, so she recommended the item be tabled.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER STAFSTROM MOVED TO TABLE**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER MARELLA SECONDED**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

125-12 Grant Submission: re Southwestern Connecticut Agency on the Aging (SWCAA) Title III Funds Program for the East Side Senior Center.

Patrick Carleton stated that this program was located on the east side. The center is open from 9:00 am to 3:30 pm and they offer a variety of activities. He noted that 80-90% of the clients are Hispanic. They visit museums, arts and crafts and they bring in nurses and doctors to address the clients needs. They also celebrate Latino Heritage Month. There is no city match. The amount of the grant is \$90k.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER MARELLA MOVED TO APPROVE**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BRANTLEY SECONDED**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

***Consent calendar**

126-12 Grant Submission: re Southwestern Connecticut Agency on the Aging (SWCAA) Title III Funds Program for the Evidence Based Tai Chi Program.

Patrick Carleton and Liz Torres presented this item. Ms. Torres said they will offer Tai Chi classes twice per week to reap the full benefits. The seniors will expand their muscles and stretch to help flexibility. She commented that the program has been successful in Black Rock and it will be offered to four (4) senior sites in Black Rock; East Side Senior Center; The Eisenhower Center and the North End Senior Center. The program is free and is funded through SWCAA.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BRANTLEY MOVED TO APPROVE**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER STAFSTROM SECONDED**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

***Consent calendar**

127-12 Grant Submission: re Southwestern Connecticut Agency on the Aging (SWCAA) Title III Funds Program for the Senior Chore Program.

Patrick Carleton and Liz Torres presented this item. Ms. Torres explained that it's a Senior Chore Program that consists of doing minor repairs for stay at home seniors. They provide information about the program and the person that goes to the house to do the repairs. The amount of the grant is \$10,468 in-kind match funded through SWCAA.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BRANTLEY MOVED TO APPROVE**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER STAFSTROM SECONDED**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

***Consent calendar**

128-12 Grant Submission: re Southwestern Connecticut Agency on the Aging (SWCAA) Title III Funds Program for the Elderly Hispanic Program.

Patrick Carleton stated this program consists of assisting seniors with applications and the medical component is run by Victor Diaz.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BRANTLEY MOVED TO APPROVE**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER MARELLA SECONDED**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

***Consent calendar**

- *Council member Stafstrom commented that the Central Grants Office has done a good job obtaining grants for seniors.*

129-12 Grant Submission: re State of Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development, State Historic Preservation Office for Arts Catalyzing Placemaking (ACP) Grant Program.

Patrick Carleton stated this program will be awarded a \$50k grant for the repurposing of McLevy Hall located downtown. It will be transformed for a work space for artists for work focused on the City of Bridgeport art; each artist will agree to focus on the city's history. He noted that they are currently located in the Reads Art Space and they will

eventually move to McLevy Hall. The amount of the grant is \$50k with a \$25k in-kind match.

Council member Stafstrom asked if this is what resulted after trying to sell the property at McLevy Hall. Bill Coleman said this will be a temporary solution to enhance the building and it won't impede the ability to sell the building in the future.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER MARELLA MOVED TO APPROVE**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BRANTLEY SECONDED**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

***Consent calendar**

81-12 Proposed Resolution adopting the South Avenue Project Development Plan and authorizing the Bridgeport Port Authority to acquire, including by eminent domain, certain real properties within the plan area.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER MARELLA MOVED TO TABLE**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER STAFSTROM SECONDED**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

- Bill Coleman updated that they were still trying to reach an agreement with the party(s) involved.
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119-12 Proposed Resolution Concerning the Disposition of City-Owned Property to the Housing Authority and Ordering a Public Hearing Relative to the Same.

Max Perez stated that this item pertained to the balance of property that the city owes the Bridgeport Housing Authority at block-406 – *he read the designated addresses*. He recalled that back in May 2006; the city acquired acreage to build a school and this is the balance of the property from the Father Panik site. He repeated that it's property that is owed to the Bridgeport Housing Authority for Watersville School.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER STAFSTROM MOVED TO APPROVE**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BRANTLEY SECONDED**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

***Consent calendar**

- ** COUNCIL MEMBER STAFSTROM MOVED TO SCHEDULE A PUBLIC HEARING PRIOR TO THE NEXT CITY COUNCIL MEETING**
- ** COUNCIL MEMBER MARELLA SECONDED**
- ** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

120-12 Proposed Resolution Concerning the Disposition and Redevelopment of City-Owned Property located at 18-20 Island Brook Avenue and Ordering a Public Hearing Relative to the same.

Bill Coleman explained that this resolution pertained to the old pump station located on Island Brook Avenue. The property has been abandoned and it was turned over to the city and Bud's Diesel is looking to acquire the property to expand his existing garage. It will be an additional 10,000 sq. ft. measuring 65x70. He further explained that he needs the abutting property for parking. The property was appraised at \$50k on May 22, 1013 and the city will receive the appraised value.

- ** COUNCIL MEMBER MARELLA MOVED TO APPROVE**
- ** COUNCIL MEMBER BANTA SECONDED**
- ** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

***Consent calendar**

- ** COUNCIL MEMBER MARELLA MOVED TO SCHEDULE A PUBLIC HEARING PRIOR TO THE NEXT CITY COUNCIL MEETING**
- ** COUNCIL MEMBER BANTA SECONDED**
- ** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

124-12 Proposed Resolution Concerning the Transfer of Real Property located at 112 (Ref. #82-11) Madison Avenue and 118 Madison Avenue.

Bill Coleman stated Louis Vaz was present to discuss the item. He stated that they have been working with Mr. Vaz who owns the piece of property located on Central Avenue & Johnson Creek. The city entered into a donation agreement after having it demolished to allow visual access to Johnson Creek. They are back to ask for approval to dispose of the property on Madison Avenue – *he showed slides surrounding the property.*

He explained that Mr. Vaz was unaware when he bought the property that the city owned the waters edge, but he made a good attempt to clean it up. Mr. Vaz purchased the property at the end of 2011 and the building was appraised on August 16, 2013 for \$80k and he purchased it for \$60k; so the property has a value of \$80k.

Co-chair Martinez questioned why it took so long to clean up the building. Mr. Coleman said the city has been in negotiation and the Vaz brothers have been working with them to be responsible. Co-chair Brantley commented that people are still dumping on the property.

Joe Vaz said they were looking to do an import/export business of decorative sculpture stones that will be stored inside the building.

Council member Lyons commented that she was familiar with the Vaz brothers. She mentioned that they are dedicated to Bridgeport and it's a good thing they are donating the property and cleaning it up in exchange for another building.

Mr. Vaz said they have plans to improve the sidewalks, replace the roof and windows and install landscaping.

Council member Lyons requested a copy of the plans when they're available, so the committee can see what the property will look like.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER MARELLA MOVED TO APPROVE**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER BRANTLEY SECONDED**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

***Consent calendar**

- Council member Stafstrom pointed out that the property they were taking back, will have a much lower assessed value than the property that the Vaz brothers

are getting. Overall, he said this will result in a more positive transaction for the city.

135-12 Proposed Resolution re Disposition of Property located at “The Davidson’s Block” in Downtown North and Authorizing a Tax Incentive Agreement in support of the Block’s Historic Renovation and Redevelopment as a Mixed-Use Residential, Retail and Commercial Complex also Ordering a Public Hearing Relative to Same.

Mr. Coleman stated that Justin and Evan Goldberg were present to answer questions about this item. He gave an update about the numerous rehabilitation deals that have occurred in the city. He said this item involved the rehabilitation of Davidson’s Fabric building and new construction – *he showed slides of what’s surrounding the building*. He pointed out where they were looking to remove the triangular piece to the right of the block to build an office building. He noted that the Goldberg’s competed for the site through the RFP process. They are selling the building at the appraised value and they will allow the developer five years to pay the city the appraised value that will accrue at a 3% interest rate.

Mr. Coleman explained another component of the agreement was the Tax Incentive. Council member Brannelly asked him to clarify the negotiation terms. Mr. Coleman highlighted the financial aspects of the project and he pointed out the tax rate that they are asking to discount by one-third, noting that it will be a \$23 million project.

Justin Goldberg explained that they need to acquire the case and equity, noting that the total budget is \$26 million and they will obtain financing for the remainder. He said they were confident that they will obtain the financing. He noted other projects they have done in Bridgeport such as: 225 Golden Hill Street; 400 Atlantic Street; 1148 William Street and other properties in the city. It was stated that they also own the McDonald’s building downtown, noting that this proves how they have previously invested in Bridgeport and have the experience.

Co-chair Brantley asked if they were going to construct (200) apartments on the lot. Mr. Goldberg said yes, they will be constructed among three and four buildings. And there will be at least (100) parking spaces in accordance with the parking regulations.

Mr. Goldberg oriented the committee to the site via the slides to show them where the buildings will be constructed. He said they will all be one-bedroom apartments at a rental cost of approximately \$1,200.

Mr. Coleman reviewed the tax incentive component as it was outlined.

There was some open discussion concerning other general aspects of the project

**** COUNCIL MEMBER STAFSTROM MOVED TO ENTER EXHIBIT-A-9-17-13
INTO THE RECORD
** COUNCIL MEMBER MARELLA SECONDED
** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

****It was stated that the properties located at 230-240-254 and 274 Middle Street and 30 Golden Hill Street should be removed from the resolution.***

**** COUNCIL MEMBER STAFSTROM MOVED TO APPROVE BY SUBSTITUTION
ITEM 135-12-A
** COUNCIL MEMBER BRANTLEY SECONDED
** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER STAFSTROM MOVED TO APPROVE
** COUNCIL MEMBER BRANTLEY SECONDED
** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

***Consent calendar**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER STAFSTROM MOVED TO SCHEDULE A PUBLIC
HEARING PRIOR TO THE NEXT CITY COUNCIL MEETING
** COUNCIL MEMBER BRANTLEY SECONDED
** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

ADJOURNED

**** CO-CHAIR STAFSTROM MOVED TO ADJOURN
** COUNCIL MEMBER BRANTLEY SECONDED
** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

The meeting was adjourned at 7:40 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Diane Graham
Telesco Secretarial Services